

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4201

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMTBASSY LONDON 3095

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 13058

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN IR

SUBJECT: BLITZ INTERVIEW WITH THE SHAH

SUMMARY: BLITZ OF SEPTEMBER 28 REPORTS THE SHAH'S INTERVIEW WITH ITS EDITOR JUST BEFORE THE SHAH'S DEPARTURE ON HIS SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN TRIP. PROMPTED BY THE BLITZ EDITOR, THE SHAH SPOKE ENTHUSIASTICALLY ABOUT HIS IDEA FOR COOPERATION AMONG THE LITTORAL COUNTRIES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN, REALISTICALLY ABOUT INDO-IRANIAN RELATIONS, AND CAUTIOUSLY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR IRANIAN MEDIATION BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN. END SUMMARY.

1. INDIAN OCEAN COOPERATION: THE SHAH, REFERRING TO HIS MARCH INTERVIEW WITH BLITZ, SAID " (MY) AMBITION WAS TO EXAMINE WITH INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE REGION A COMMON MARKET, FOR...THE INDIAN OCEAN COUNTRIES.

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FIRST, THE COUNTRIES TO THE NORTH OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND

THEN...THE COUNTRIES TO THE SOUTH...WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS COOPERATION...TAKE SHAPE AND REALITY. AND WHEN THIS INDIAN OCEAN COOPERATION HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THEN WE COULD TALK ABOUT ASIAN COOPERATION."

2. NAVAL COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN: WHEN ASKED ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA, THE SHAH SAID, "WELL, THE QUESTION IS, BASES OR NO BASES, WHAT IS THE PRESENCE OF SHIP-DAYS PER YEAR OF THESE NONREGIONAL FOREIGN COUNTRIES? SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE A 9,000-DAY SHIP PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. I JUST WONDER WHAT THE RUSSIANS OR FOR THAT MATTER THE AMERICANS ARE DOING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IN ANY CASE... MAYBE ONE DAY IF WE ARE REALLY UNITED, WE SHALL TELL THEM: PLEASE WITHDRAW YOUR FORCES BECAUSE THERE IS NO REASON FOR YOUR PRESENCE HERE." EARLIER WHEN ASKED ABOUT NAVAL COOPERATION TO FIGHT SMUGGLING, THE SHAH HAD REMARKED, "IF WE THINK OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A FREE ZONE LEFT TO THE LOCAL COUNTRIES, THEN EVENTUALLY WE SHALL HAVE TO TALK WITH YOUR PEOPLE ON A VERY THOROUGH METICULOUS COLLABORATION PLAN BETWEEN OUR TWO NAVIES."

3. INDIA-IRAN: "RELATIONS IN EVERY SPHERE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES ARE PROGRESSING VERY SATISFACTORILY," THE SHAH SAID. WHEN ASKED ABOUT INDIAN ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE IN CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECTS IN IRAN, HE CAUTIONED, "THE QUESTION IS HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE WITH OUR VERY LIMITED CONSTRUCTION POSSIBILITIES AND YOURS..." ON THE POSSIBILITY OF MORE SOFT LOANS, HE SAID, "ALL WILL DEPEND ON THE SCOPE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, SPECIALLY THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS IRON-ORE MINE OF YOURS OR THE ALUMINIUM RESOURCES, THE BAUXITE MINE MAKING ALUMINA..." ON THE NEED TO AVOID A "DRAINING" OF INDIAN RESOURCES OF TECHNICAL MANPOWER, THE SHAH SAID, "WE DO NOT WANT TO DRAIN YOU IN THOSE FIELDS BECAUSE YOU REALLY NEED YOUR BRAIN POWER, BUT DO NOT BE SURPRISED IF WE DRAIN YOU OF NURSES AS ENGLAND HAS DONE. WHY SHOULD THEY NOT COME HERE? WE WOULD PAY THEM CERTAINLY NOT LESS THAN THE BRITISH DO." ON THE POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATION FOR PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR POWER, "I THINK THERE SHOULD BE A KIND OF WORLD COLLABORATION ON THAT... I HAVE PROPOSED A MILITARY NUCLEAR FREE ZONE

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IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THAT MEANS NO WEAPONS. BUT IT DOES NOT MEAN NO ATOMIC ENERGY OR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY. ON THE CONTRARY, WE ARE GOING TO PLAN FOR A MINIMUM OF 23,000 MEGAWATTS."

4. PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN: WHEN ASKED ABOUT IRAN-AFGHAN RELATIONS AND SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE REPORTED ONE-BILLION-DOLLAR IRANIAN LOAN TO AFGHANISTAN, THE SHAH COMMENTED,

"OUR FIRST DUTY AS A FRIEND IS TO OFFER AFGHANISTAN ALL
OUR POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSITING AND REACHING THE SEA...
WE ARE ALSO READY TO STUDY WITH OUR AFGHAN FRIENDS EVERY
SOUND PROJECT THAT THEY HAVE..." WHEN ASKED ABOUT
CONCRETE STEPS HIS GOVERNMENT MIGHT TAKE TO RESOLVE
PAK-AFGHAN PROBLEMS, HE REPLIED, "IN THE PAST, WHEN WE
FELT THAT THEY BOTH--PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN--WANTED OUR
SERVICES AS A MEDIATOR, WE OFFERED IT VERY SINCERELY. IF
TOMORROW WE WOULD BE TOLD OR MADE TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE
COULD BE OF ANY USE AS A GO-BETWEEN, AS A MEDIATOR, WE
SHALL DO SO. BUT WE MUST ABSOLUTELY KNOW THAT THEY WANT
OUR COOPERATION."

5. FULL TEXT POUCHED TEHRAN AND DEPARTMENT.SCHNEIDER

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